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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/018,732	03/08/2002	Hiroshi Kajiyama	3620-4014	5009

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EXAMINER

BEFUMO, JENNA LEIGH

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1771

DATE MAILED: 04/08/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/018,732

Applicant(s)

KAJIYAMA ET AL. 

Examiner

Jenna-Leigh Befumo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-75 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-75 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The previous restriction requirement is withdrawn since it was not based on the correct version of the claims filed on December 18, 2001. However, a new restriction requirement based on claims 1 – 75 is set forth below.

2. In response to the Applicant's arguments that the restriction should be based on US restriction practice and not lack of unity practice, it is noted that MPEP §1893.03(d) sets forth that an application filed under 35 USC 371, or in other words a national stage of a PCT application, must be restricted based on unity of invention. Therefore, the present application cannot be restricted by US practice since it is a national stage entry of a PCT application.

3. Further, in response to the Applicant's argument that a lack of unity is not applicable to the present set of claims since all the claims are drawn to a polylactic acid composition comprising at least 95% of the lactic acid L-isomer, it is pointed out that not all of the claims recite this limitation. And therefore, these do not all relate to a core invention.

Election/Restrictions

4. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claims 1 – 4, and 12 – 44, drawn to a polylactic acid composition comprising 95 mol% or more of L-isomer.

Group II, claims 5 – 11, drawn to a polylactic acid multifilament comprising 98 mol% or more of L-isomer.

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Group III, claims 45 – 65, drawn to a polylactic acid false-twisted yarn comprising a monomer content in the polylactic acid of 0.5% by weight or less.

Group IV, claims 66 – 71, drawn to a polylactic acid binder yarn/fiber comprising 90 mol% or more of L-isomer.

Group V, claims 72 – 75, drawn to a nonwoven fabric made from a sheath/core fiber comprising a core component made from a polylactic acid composition and a sheath component which includes a polylactic acid composition blended with a second polymer.

5. The inventions listed as Groups I – V do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: First, the different groups do not have the same common technical features since they are claiming different polylactic acid compositions, and thus a lack of unity of invention is appropriate. Since the groups do not claim the same polymer composition, they lack a common technical feature. Second, Matsui et al. (6,174,602) discloses fibers made from polylactic acids components, specifically a homopolymer of poly-L-lactic acid (column 6, lines 61 – 65). The fibers can be used to make yarns as well as fabrics. Thus, Matsui et al. teaches the polylactic acid composition claimed by the Applicant. Accordingly, the special technical feature linking the inventions, the polylactic acid composition, does not provide a contribution over the prior art, and no single general inventive concept exists. Therefore, a lack of unity of invention is appropriate.

6. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

7. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jenna-Leigh Befumo whose telephone number is (571) 272-1472. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (8:00 - 5:30).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on (571) 272-1478. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Jenna-Leigh Befumo
March 26, 2004



CHERYL A. JUSKA
PRIMARY EXAMINER